

# **Summary of Results from the 2005-2006 Somerville High School Health Survey**

## **Submitted to:**

The Somerville Public Schools,  
The Cambridge Health Alliance, and  
The Somerville Cares About Prevention Coalition through  
The Somerville Health Department

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## BACKGROUND

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### REPORT FORMAT

In February of 2006, 1,003 Somerville high school students (grades 9-12) took part in the 2005-2006 Somerville High School Health Survey. The survey was developed by the Somerville Public Schools, the Cambridge Health Alliance, and the Somerville Cares About Prevention Coalition through the Somerville Health Department. Based on surveys such as the *Youth Risk Behavior Survey* (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), *Monitoring the Future* (NIDA, University of Michigan), *Profiles of Student Life – Attitudes and Behaviors*, and the *Survey of Student Resources and Assets* (America's Promise and Search Institute), the questionnaire was designed to gather information on some of the important issues facing youth in Somerville, such as substance use, violence and safety, and stress. A similar survey of Somerville high school students was conducted during the 2001-2002 school year and the same survey was administered during the 2003-2004 school year.

This report summarizes results from the Somerville High School Health Survey. It is designed to provide an overview of key survey data, focusing on four main themes: (1) What do the data from this survey tell us about the challenges facing youth in our community?; (2) Are there any important sub-population differences among respondents (such as by gender or grade)?; (3) How have the data changed since the last administration of the survey?; and (4) How do results in Somerville compare to those in Massachusetts as a whole? The summary presents an overview of findings grouped according to the following themes: Substance Use, Violence and Safety, Mental Health, Sexual Behavior, Weight Perception and Control, Physical Activity, and Resiliency. The main results in each section are illustrated using charts that are complemented by supplementary data or information. An appendix containing selected data follows the main results.

### WHO CONDUCTED THE SURVEY?

The survey was conducted by the Somerville Public Schools, the Cambridge Health Alliance, and the Somerville Cares About Prevention Coalition through the Somerville Health Department in collaboration with Social Science Research and Evaluation, Inc. (SSRE), a non-profit social science research firm located in Burlington, Massachusetts.

### HOW AND WHEN WAS THE SURVEY CONDUCTED?

The survey was administered as a questionnaire in February of 2006 to all Somerville public school students in grades 9 through 12. The number of respondents in each grade is as follows:

9 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>	11 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	Other/ Unknown	TOTAL
276	249	235	235	8	1,003

School administrators set aside approximately 20-30 minutes for students to complete the survey. The attending classroom teacher was responsible for passing out the questionnaires and maintaining order. In addition to English, the survey was translated into Spanish, Portuguese, and Haitian.

## **WHAT DID THE SURVEY ASK ABOUT?**

The survey focuses on issues ranging from demographic and background items (e.g., gender, age), to student substance use (e.g., alcohol, tobacco, other drugs), to other issues related to student health such as depression and suicide, violence and safety, sexual behavior, and dietary behavior.

## **VALIDITY**

There is a good deal of research about the ways in which students respond to surveys and whether they tell the truth. This work indicates that student survey results are reasonably accurate provided that student participation is voluntary and that the respondents cannot be identified. The Somerville High School Health Survey met these conditions. The voluntary nature of the survey was explained to both students and their parents. Prior to the survey, parents were given the opportunity to opt their child(ren) out of the survey. In addition, students could choose not to participate or to skip any items. The confidential nature of the survey was highlighted in the questionnaire instructions that asked students not to put their name on the questionnaire and explained that their answers would not be viewed by anyone who knows them.

Two other steps were taken to increase validity. First, each questionnaire was reviewed to identify any on which students obviously provided frivolous answers. Such questionnaires were omitted from all analyses. Second, analyses were conducted to test for the reasonableness of responses and for the consistency of responses across related items. When inconsistent responses were identified, the entire case or the suspect items for that case were treated as missing data in all subsequent analyses. These two procedures identified few problems.

The validity of the survey is also bolstered by using a questionnaire based largely upon existing instruments such as the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), Monitoring the Future (University of Michigan), and Profiles of Student Life – Attitudes and Behaviors and Survey of Student Resources and Assets (America's Promise and Search Institute). These standardized instruments have been thoroughly tested and administered in large-scale research studies (see Brener, N., Kann, L., McManus, T., Kinchen, S.A., Sundberg E.C., and Ross, J.G. [2002]. "Reliability of the 1999 Youth Risk Behavior Survey Questionnaire." *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 31, 336-342).

## **NON-RESPONDENTS**

The survey results can be generalized only to students who were present when the survey was administered. The results may not reflect responses that might have been obtained from students who were absent or truant on the day(s) that the survey was administered, nor from students who have dropped out of school.

## **TRENDS**

Trend comparisons can provide useful information on whether certain behaviors or conditions have improved, worsened, or stayed the same over time. In fact, it is best to repeat a survey such as this at regular intervals in order to track changes over time. Because this is the third administration of the Somerville High School Health Survey (the same survey was administered in 2004 and a similar instrument in 2002), it is possible to look at certain trends among Somerville youth.

## **COMPARATIVE DATA**

A limitation of such data is that it is difficult to compare results from Somerville to results from other communities. Making comparisons to other communities is quite complicated – surveys are not exactly alike, the populations used may differ in unknown ways, the timing of the surveys may vary, and so on. Although it is natural to want to compare to other communities, a great deal can be learned simply by looking at Somerville data and the most useful comparisons are made by looking at Somerville over time.

In addition to selected trend data for Somerville, limited comparisons can be made to Massachusetts as a whole since the Massachusetts Department of Education administers the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) to a sample of Massachusetts high school students every two years. The most recent administration of this survey occurred in the spring of 2005 and selected data from that survey were available at the time of this report. In cases where the 2005 data are not yet available, it is possible to make comparisons to results from prior Massachusetts surveys.

## **WHO HAS THE PROBLEM?**

Although this survey was administered to high school students, this does not mean that the issues addressed are confined solely to youth. For example, national studies of substance use show that rates of use are higher among young adults than adolescents. It is also important to keep in mind that while the survey focuses on a number of risky behaviors, it may not fully address the many positive aspects of adolescent life.

## **WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?**

Data on health behavior among youth is typically collected in public schools because it is comparatively simple to collect data from what is essentially a "captive" audience. The fact that data on youth are collected in schools, however, does not mean that the schools bear the sole or even the largest responsibility for the risky behaviors revealed in these surveys. Issues such as those addressed in the survey are not school problems; they are community problems that require the attention of all community members and organizations.

# Substance Use

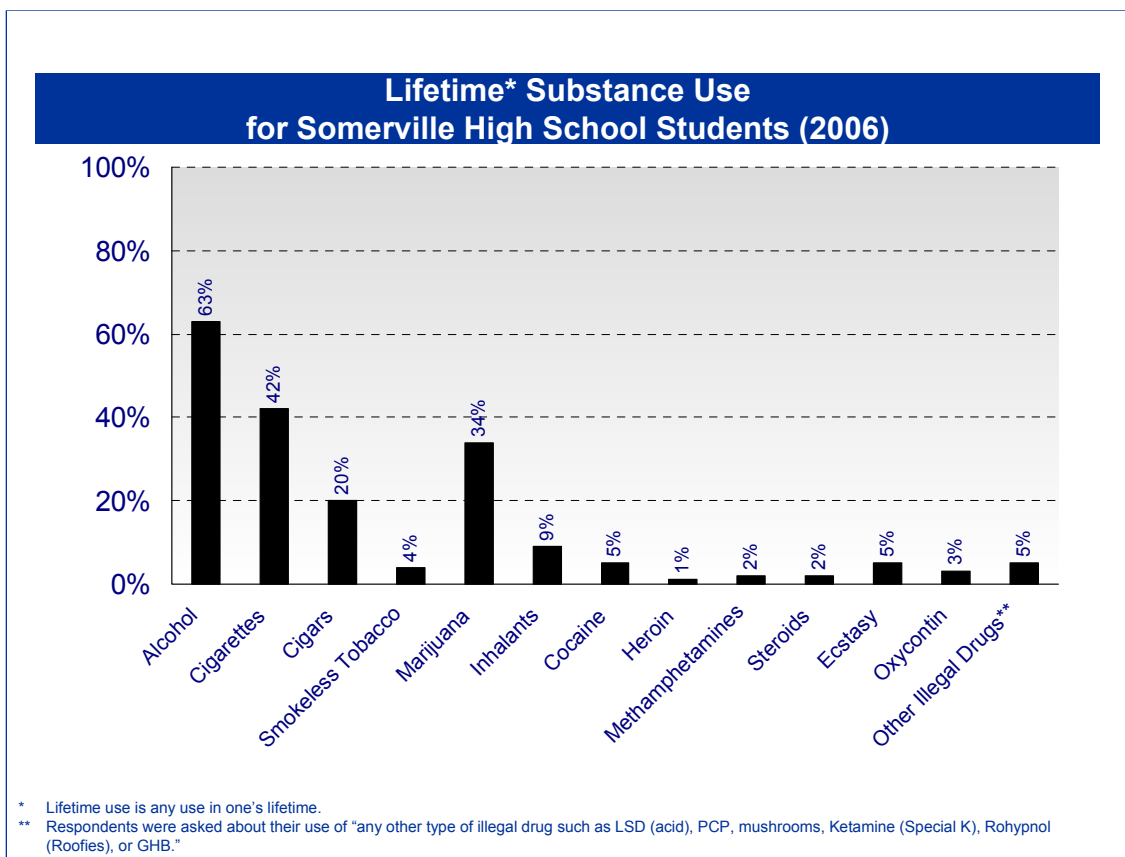
What substances are used most often by Somerville youth?

How does use change as youth age?

Are boys or girls more likely to use substances?

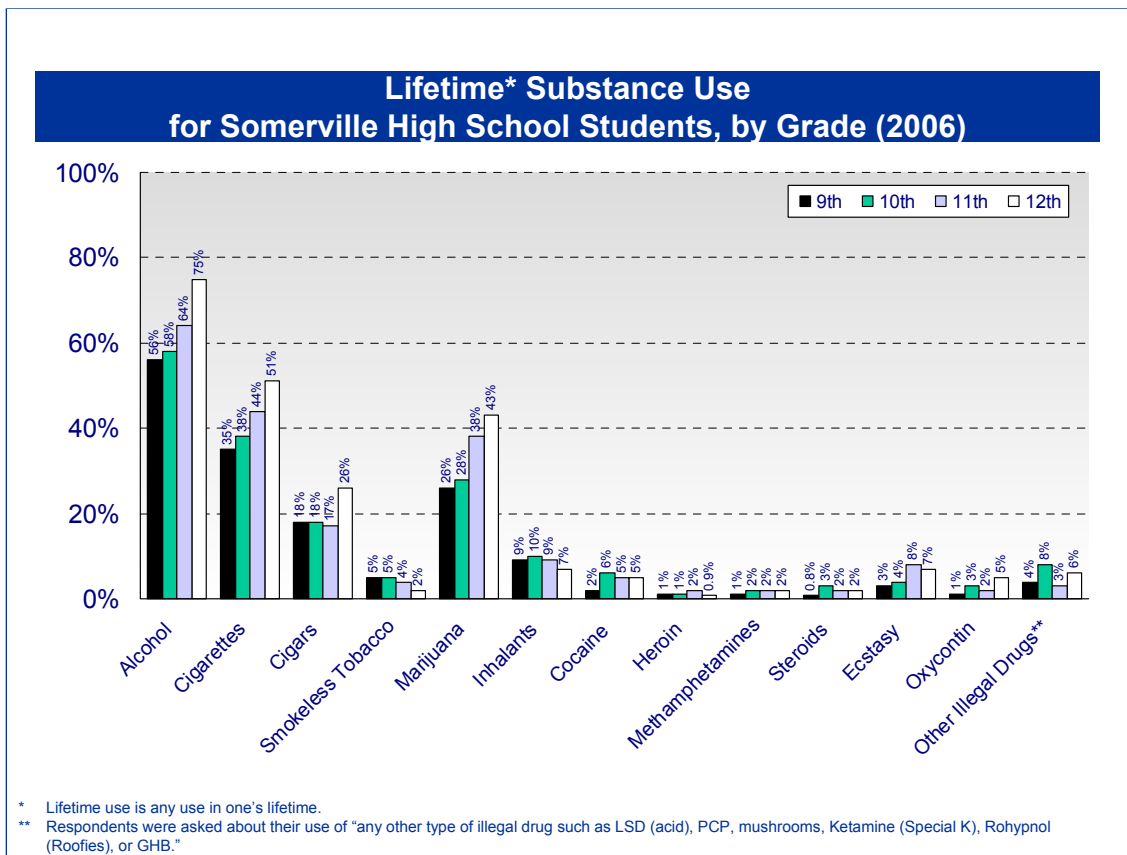
How has use changed in Somerville over time?

Are rates of substance use higher or lower in Somerville than in other places?



## SELECTED POINTS

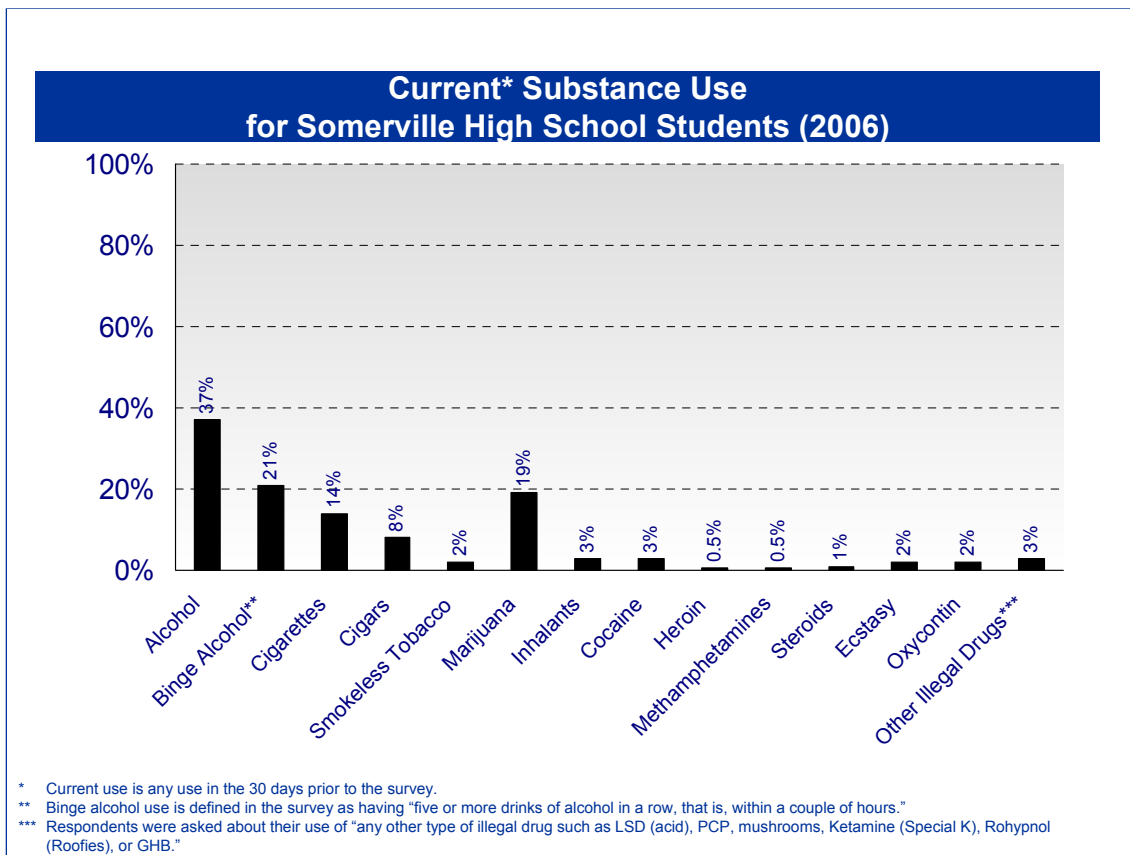
- Lifetime substance use is any use in one's lifetime.
- The questions about alcohol were preceded by the following instruction, "The next questions ask about drinking alcohol. This includes drinking beer, wine, wine coolers, and liquor such as rum, vodka, or whiskey. For these questions, drinking alcohol does NOT include drinking a few sips of wine for religious purposes."
- Alcohol is the substance of choice, with 63% of Somerville high school students reporting that they had consumed alcohol in their lifetime. Under half (42%) reported ever smoking cigarettes, 34% ever smoking marijuana, and 20% ever smoking cigars. Use of other illegal drugs is much lower with 5% or less reporting ever using cocaine (5%), ecstasy (5%), other illegal drugs (5%), oxycontin (3%), methamphetamines (2%), steroids (2%), or heroin (1%).



## SELECTED POINTS

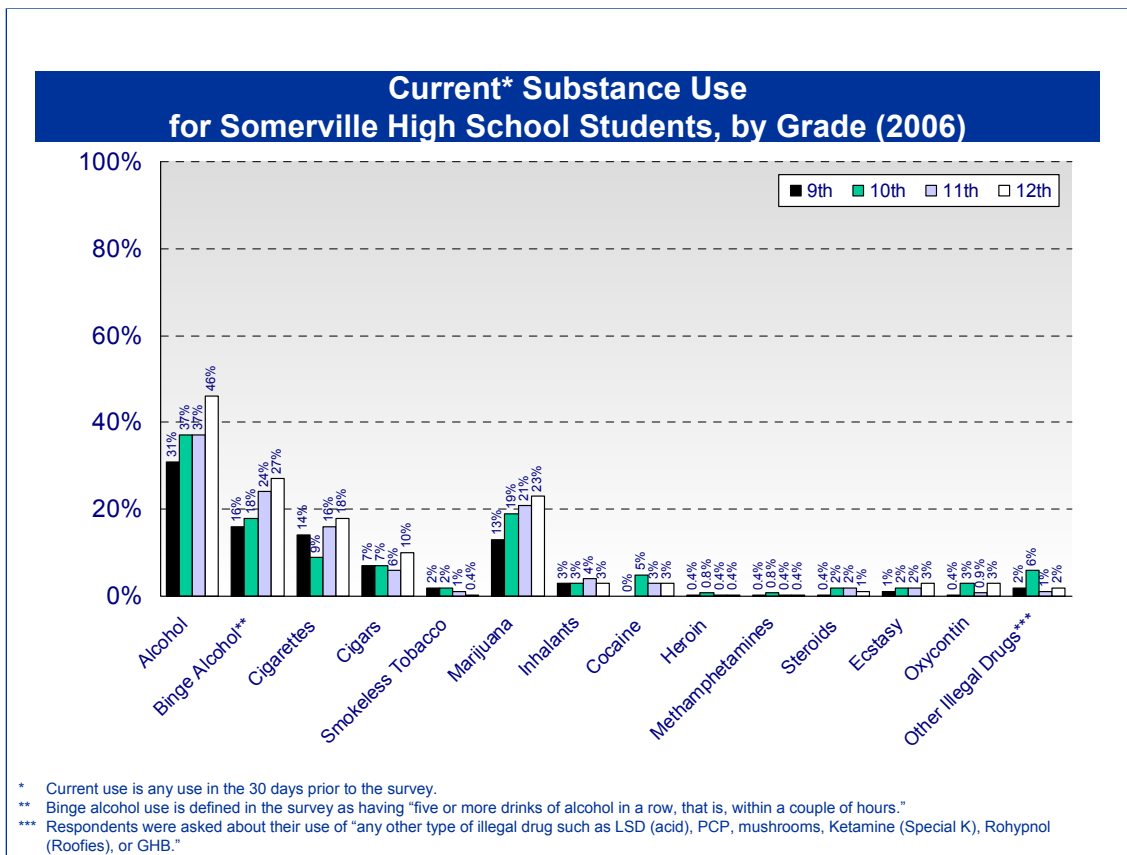
- Overall, the percentage of students who reported ever using each of these substances increased with age/grade. For example, 56% of Somerville 9<sup>th</sup> graders reported ever drinking alcohol, compared to 75% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders.
- By late winter of their senior year, three quarters of Somerville youth have tried alcohol (75%), over half have tried cigarettes (51%), just under half have tried marijuana (43%), and one quarter have tried smoking cigars (26%).
- Note that the use of illegal drugs other than marijuana does not vary as substantially across grades.





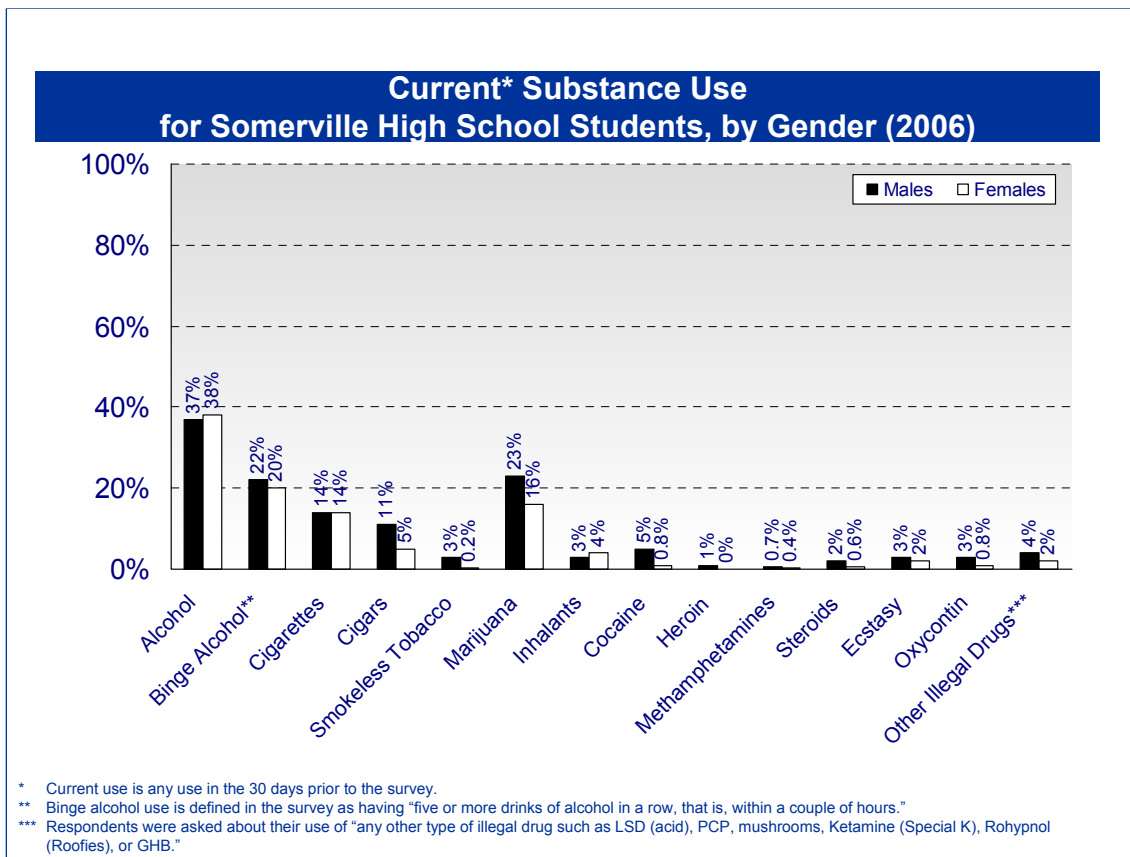
## SELECTED POINTS

- Current use is any use in the 30 days prior to the survey.
- Alcohol is the substance of choice, with 37% of Somerville high school students reporting that they consumed alcohol in the 30 days prior to the survey.
- Twenty-six percent (21%) of respondents reporting binge drinking in the same time period. This means that over half of those who drank in the past 30 days engaged in binge drinking.
- Note that the rate of current marijuana use (19%) is higher than the rate of current cigarette use (14%).
- Current use of illegal drugs other than marijuana is comparatively low.



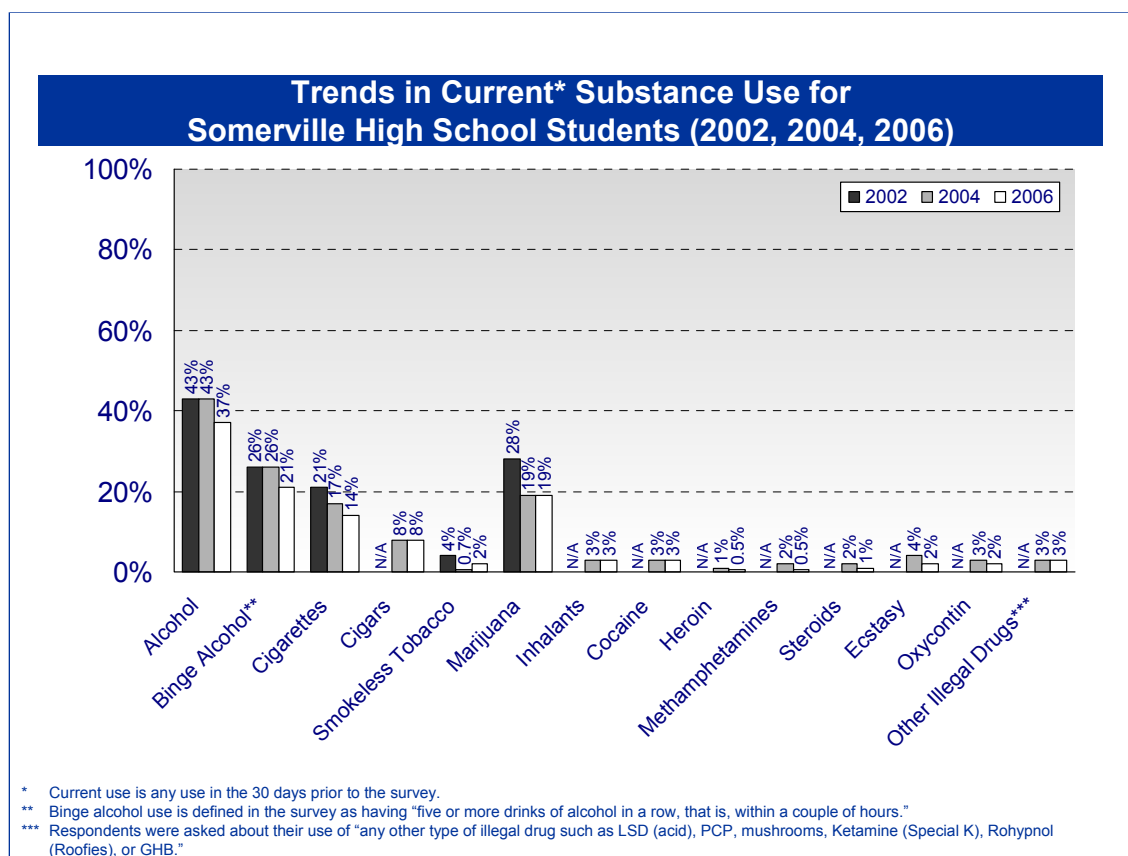
## SELECTED POINTS

- The percentage of Somerville high school youth who reported current use of more commonly used substances such as alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana increased with age/grade. For example, the percentage of students who reported current marijuana use increased from 13% in 9<sup>th</sup> grade to 23% in 12<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Current use of illegal drugs other than marijuana generally remained at a comparatively low level across grades.
- Twelfth graders generally reported the highest rates of current substance use, although use of illegal drugs other than marijuana did not vary substantively by grade.



## SELECTED POINTS

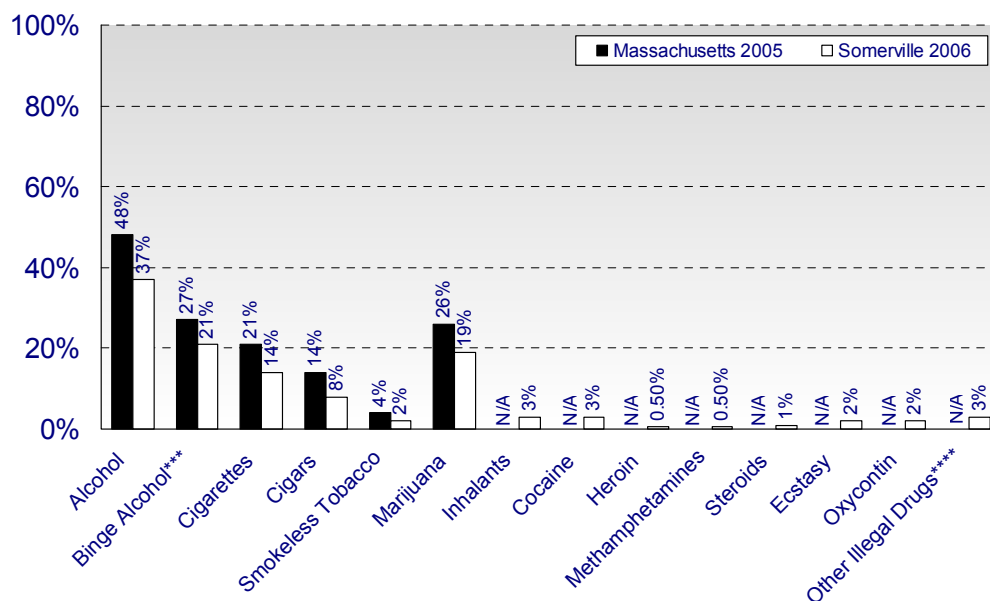
- Somerville high school males and females reported similar rates of current substance use. Of particular note are the comparable use rates for alcohol (37% males, 38% females), binge alcohol (22%, 20%), and cigarettes (14%, 14%).
- Males were, however, more likely to report current use of substances such as cigars (11% males, 5% females), marijuana (23%, 16%), smokeless tobacco (3%, 0.2%), cocaine (5%, 0.8%), and oxycontin (3%, 0.8%), and were slightly more likely to report the use of most other illegal drugs.



## SELECTED POINTS

- Rates of current substance use among Somerville high school students generally decreased or remained unchanged between 2004 and 2006.
- Some of the more substantive decreases occurred in use of alcohol (43% in 2004 to 37% in 2006), binge alcohol (26% to 21%) and cigarettes (17% to 14%).

## Current\* Substance Use for Massachusetts\*\* (2005) and Somerville (2006) High School Students



\* Current use is any use in the 30 days prior to the survey.

\*\* Massachusetts data from the 2005 *Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey* conducted by the MA Department of Education (spring 2005).

\*\*\* Binge alcohol use is defined in the survey as having "five or more drinks of alcohol in a row, that is, within a couple of hours."

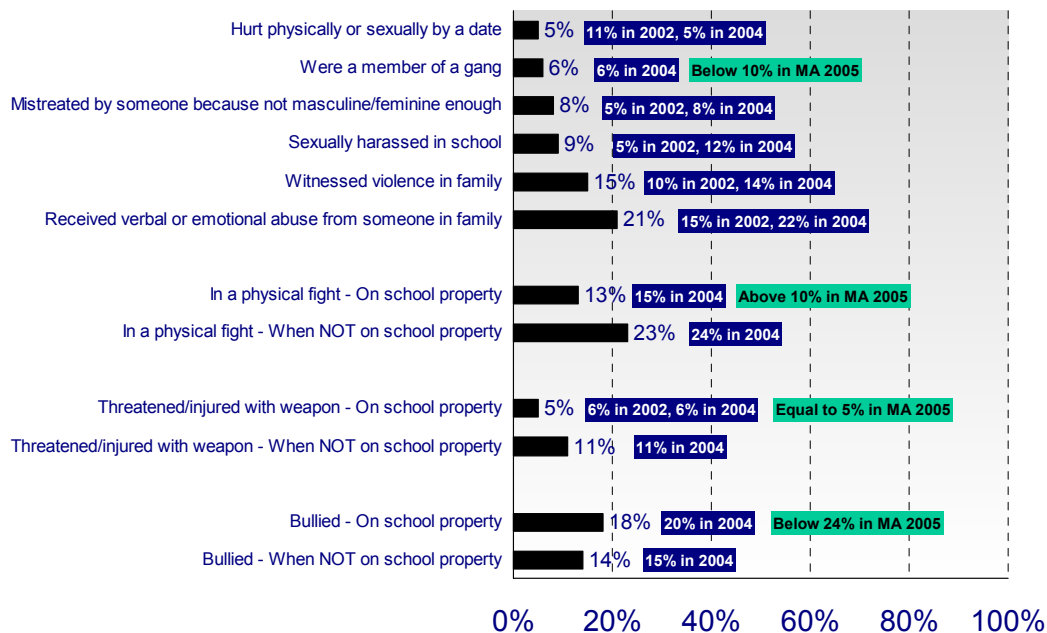
\*\*\*\* Respondents were asked about their use of "any other type of illegal drug such as LSD (acid), PCP, mushrooms, Ketamine (Special K), Rohypnol (Roofies), or GHB."

### SELECTED POINTS

- Current use rates for all substances were lower in Somerville than in Massachusetts as a whole (comparing Somerville 2006 to the most recent Massachusetts 2005 data):
  - Alcohol (48% MA vs. 37% Somerville)
  - Binge Alcohol (27% vs. 21%)
  - Cigarettes (21% vs. 14%)
  - Cigars (14% vs. 8%)
  - Smokeless Tobacco (4% vs. 2%)
  - Marijuana (26% vs. 19%)
- Comparative data are not available for other substances because the questions were not included in the Massachusetts survey.

# Violence and Safety

## Percent of Somerville High School Students Who Reported Violence-Related Experiences in the Past 12 Months (2006)\*



\* Trend and comparative data are available only for the items listed.

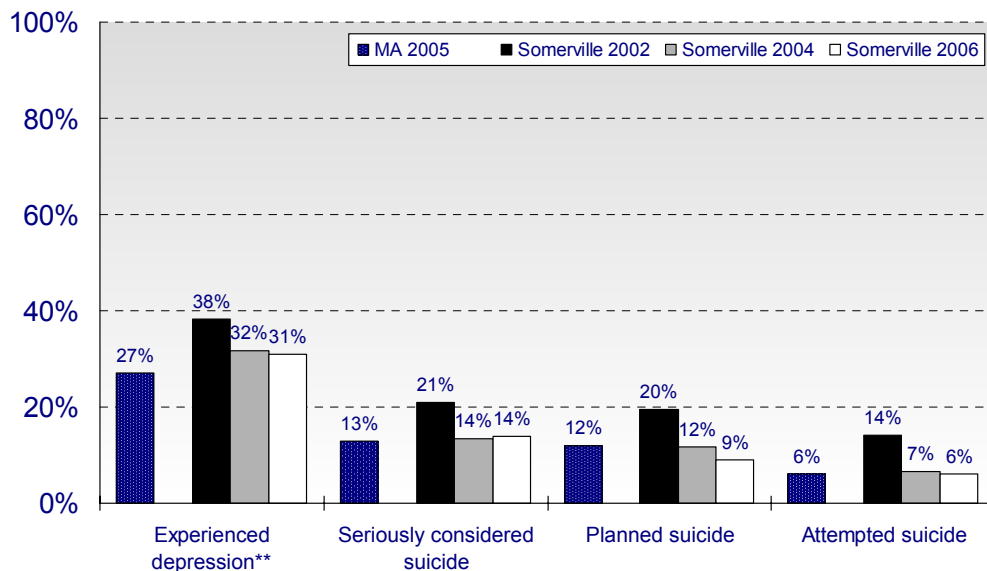
### SELECTED POINTS

- The data illustrate violence-related experiences that respondents reported happened to them at least once in the past 12 months. All available trend and comparative data are highlighted.
- On and Off School Property:** Respondents reported that both physical fighting and being threatened or injured with a weapon more commonly occurred when they were *off* of school property; however, they were more likely to be bullied *on* school property (18%) than *off* (14%).
- Trends:** Available trend data reveal general stability between 2004 and 2006 in violence-related experiences among Somerville youth – a contrast to mostly increases observed between 2002 and 2004 – and decreases in school-sited experiences such as being sexually harassed (down from 12% in 2004 to 9% in 2006), physically fighting (down from 15% in 2004 to 13% in 2006), and being bullied (down from 20% in 2004 to 18% in 2006).
- Comparisons:** Available data comparing Somerville 2006 results to Massachusetts 2005 results are mixed. The percentage of respondents who reported that they were a member of a gang (6% Somerville, 10% MA) or who had been bullied on school property (18% Somerville, 24% MA) was lower in Somerville. The percentage who were threatened/injured with a weapon on school property was the same (5%), and the percentage who reported being in a physical fight on school property was higher in Somerville (13%) than in MA as a whole (10%).
- Gender:** Males were more likely than females to report witnessing violence in their family, being mistreated by someone who thought they weren't masculine enough, being in a gang, fighting, or being threatened/injured with a weapon. Females were more likely to report receiving verbal or emotional abuse from someone in their family, being sexually harassed in school, being hurt by a date, being bullied either at or away from school, and staying home from school out of fear. See Appendix A for details.
- Grade:** There were few consistent differences by age/grade in these reported violence-related experiences; however, rates of receiving verbal/emotional abuse from a family member (16%, 22%, 22%, 26%) and being threatened/injured with a weapon when not on school property (10%, 11%, 12%, 13%) increased with age/grade, while the rate of being bullied at school (20%, 18%, 17%, 17%) decreased with age/grade. See Appendix A for details.

# Mental Health



### Depression and Suicidal Ideation and Behavior in the Past 12 Months Among Massachusetts\* ('05) and Somerville ('02, '04, '06) High School Students



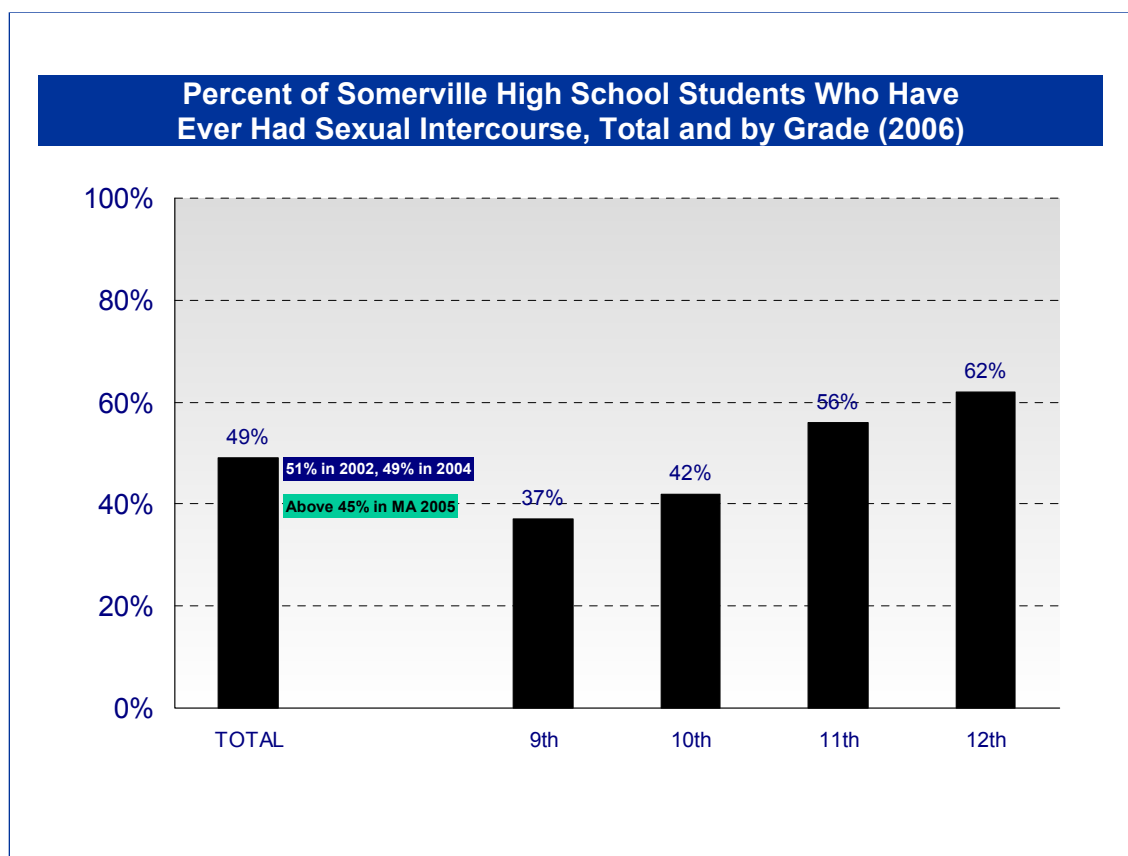
\* Massachusetts data from the 2005 *Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey* conducted by the MA Department of Education (spring 2005).

\*\* Depression is defined in the survey as feeling "so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that you stopped doing some usual activities."

### SELECTED POINTS

- Thirty-one percent (31%) of 2006 Somerville high school students reported *depression* in the 12 months prior to the survey, while 14% *seriously considered* suicide, 9% *planned* to commit suicide, and 6% *attempted* suicide.
- **Trends:** Each of these mental health issues among Somerville high school students decreased or remained steady between 2004 and 2006, continuing a downward trend since 2002: reported *depression* (32% in 2004 to 31% in 2006), *seriously considered* suicide (14% to 14%), *planned* suicide (12% to 9%), *attempted* suicide (7% to 6%).
- **Comparisons:** The 2006 rate of reported depression among Somerville high school students (31%) was higher than the Massachusetts 2005 average (27%). Rates for suicidal ideation and behavior were similar among both populations, with the Somerville rate of planning suicide dropping below the state average: *seriously considered* suicide (14% Somerville, 13% MA), *planned* suicide (9% Somerville, 12% MA), *attempted* suicide (6% Somerville, 6% MA).
- **Gender:** Female Somerville high school students were far more likely than their male counterparts to have reported each of these issues in 2006: reported *depression* (39% females, 21% males), *seriously considered* suicide (17%, 10%), *planned* suicide (10%, 7%), *attempted* suicide (8%, 3%).
- **Grade:** There were few consistent differences by grade in reports of these mental health issues (see Appendix A).

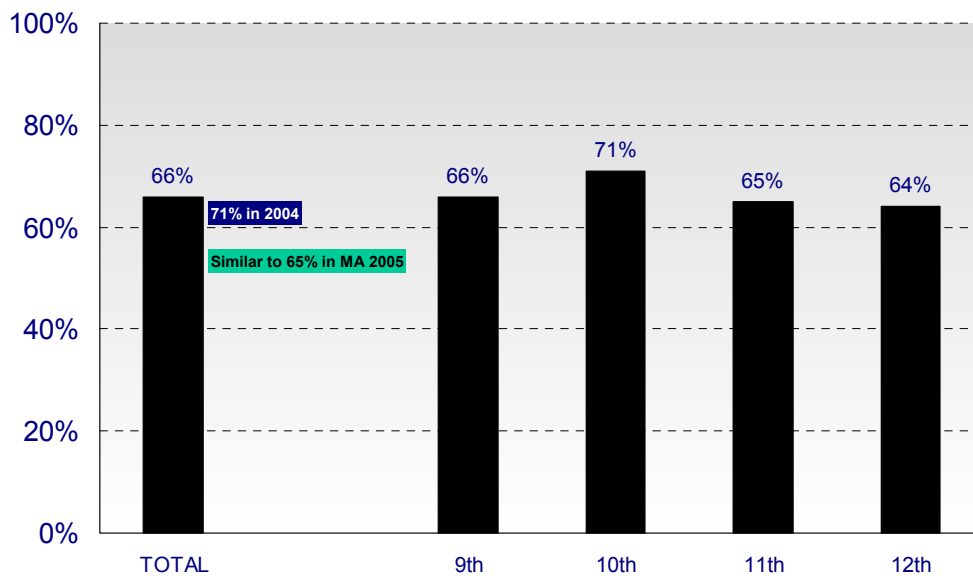
# Sexual Behavior



### SELECTED POINTS

- Forty-nine percent (49%) of all 2006 Somerville high school students reported ever having sexual intercourse: 37% of 9<sup>th</sup> graders, 42% of 10<sup>th</sup> graders, 56% of 11<sup>th</sup> graders, and 62% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders.
- **Trends:** There was no change between 2004 and 2006 in the percentage of Somerville high school students who reported ever having sexual intercourse (49%).
- **Comparisons:** The rate of lifetime sexual intercourse among 2006 Somerville high school students (49%) was higher than the 2005 Massachusetts rate (45%).
- **Gender:** A larger percentage of 2006 Somerville high school males (54%) than females (46%) reported ever having sexual intercourse.
- **Grade:** The percentage of Somerville students who reported having sexual intercourse increased with age/grade (37% in 9<sup>th</sup> grade to 62% in 12<sup>th</sup> grade).

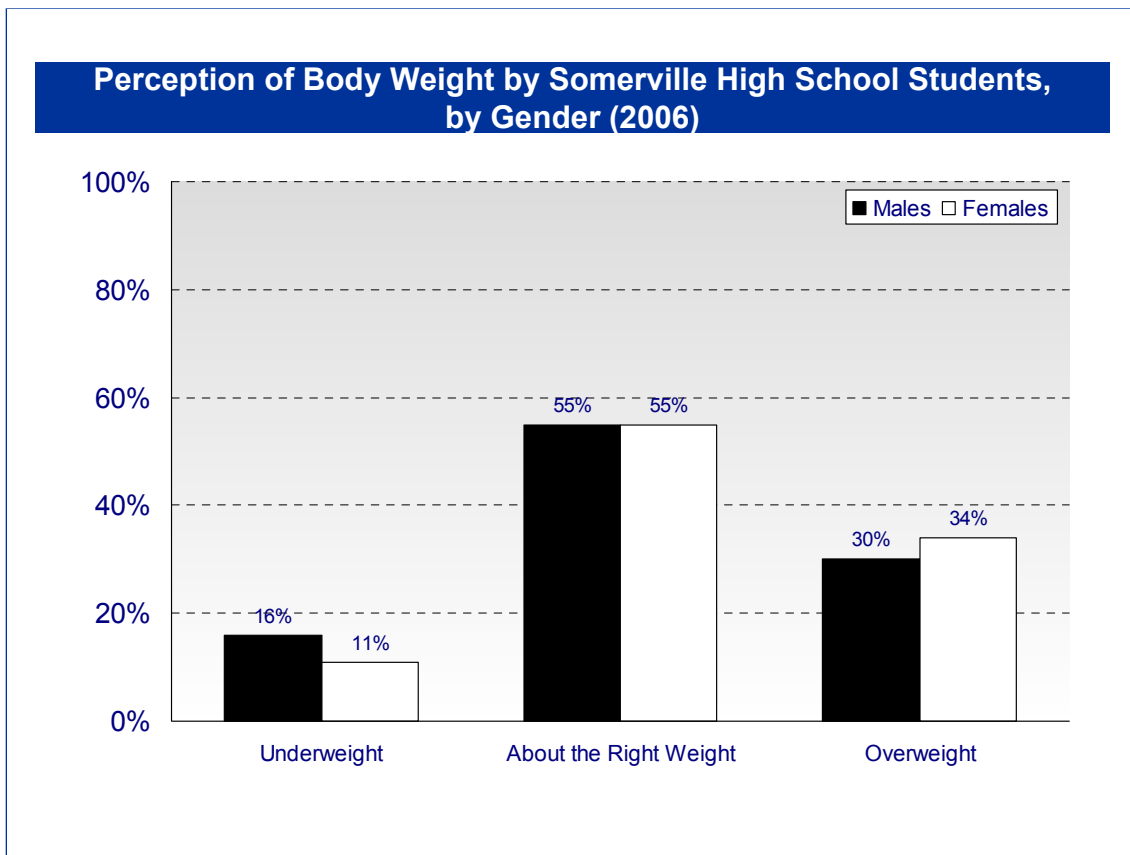
### Percent of Sexually Active Somerville High School Students Who Used a Condom at the Last Time They Had Sex, Total and by Grade (2006)



### SELECTED POINTS

- Of those Somerville high school students who reported ever having sexual intercourse, 66% reported using a condom the last time they did so.
- **Trends:** The percentage of sexually active Somerville high school students who reported that they or their partner used a condom the last time they had sexual intercourse decreased from 71% in 2004 to 66% in 2006.
- **Comparisons:** Similar percentages of 2006 Somerville high school students (66%) and 2005 Massachusetts students (65%) reported using a condom at their last sexual intercourse.
- **Gender:** Male Somerville high school students (72%) were more likely than females (60%) to report that they or their partner used a condom the last time they had intercourse.
- **Grade:** The percentage of Somerville high school students who reported using a condom during their last sexual intercourse remained fairly consistent across grades, with the highest percentage among 10<sup>th</sup> graders (71%).

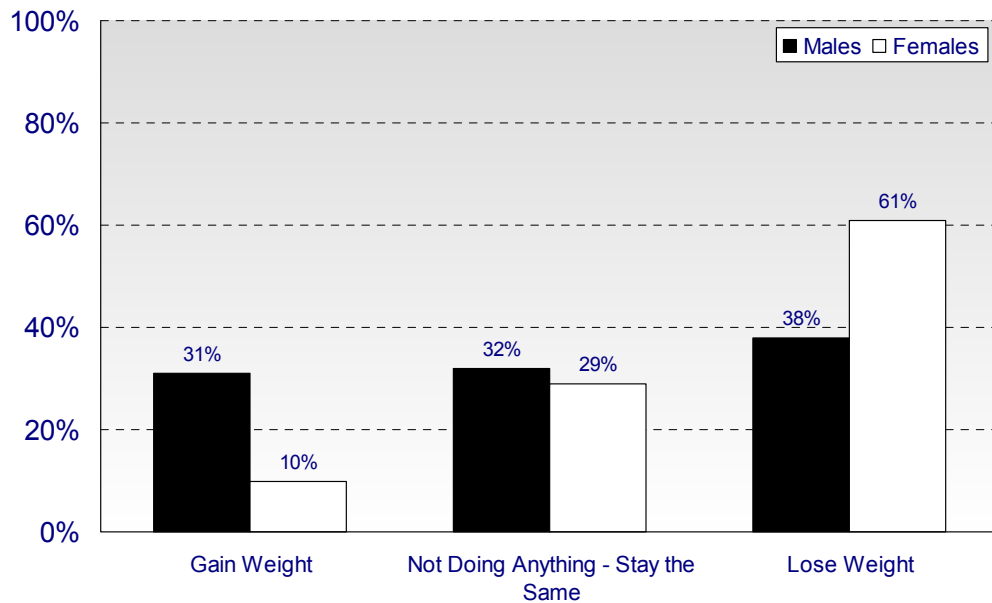
# Weight Perception and Control



### SELECTED POINTS

- Eleven percent (11%) of Somerville high school females described themselves as *underweight* compared to 16% of males, 55% as *about the right weight* compared to the same percentage of males, and 34% as *overweight* compared to 30% of males.
- **Trends:** The percentage of Somerville high school students who described themselves as *overweight* increased from 29% in 2002, to 30% in 2004, and 32% in 2006.
- **Comparisons:** Similar percentages of 2006 Somerville (32%) and 2005 Massachusetts (31%) high school students described themselves as *overweight*.
- **Grade:** There were no substantive differences in 2006 Somerville high school students' perception of their weight by age/grade (see Appendix A).

### Percent of Somerville High School Students Reporting Attempts to Change Their Weight, by Gender (2006)



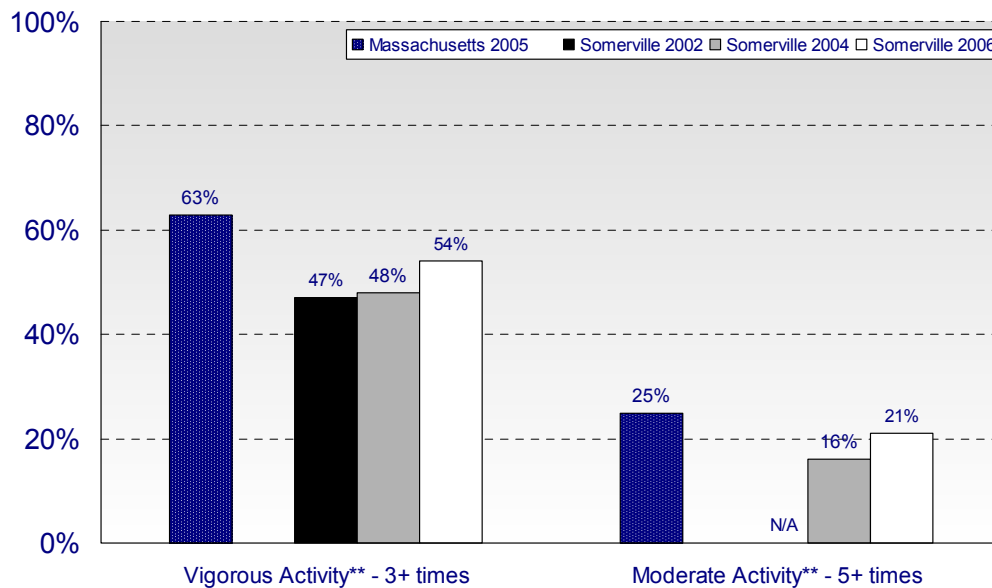
#### SELECTED POINTS

- In 2006, Somerville high school males were much more likely than females to report that they were trying to *gain* weight (31% males, 10% females) and females were far more likely to report trying to *lose* weight (38% males, 61% females).
- **Trends:** The overall percentage of Somerville high school students who reported that they were trying to *lose* weight increased slightly from 2004 (48%) to 2006 (51%), reaching the same percentage as in 2002 (51%).
- **Comparisons:** A larger percentage of 2006 Somerville (51%) than 2005 Massachusetts (47%) high school students reported that they were trying to *lose* weight.
- **Grade:** There were no consistent differences by age/grade in 2006 Somerville high school students' weight control measures (see Appendix A).

# Physical Activity



### Percent of Massachusetts\* ('05) and Somerville ('02, '04, '06) High School Students Who Reported Physical Activity in the Past 7 Days



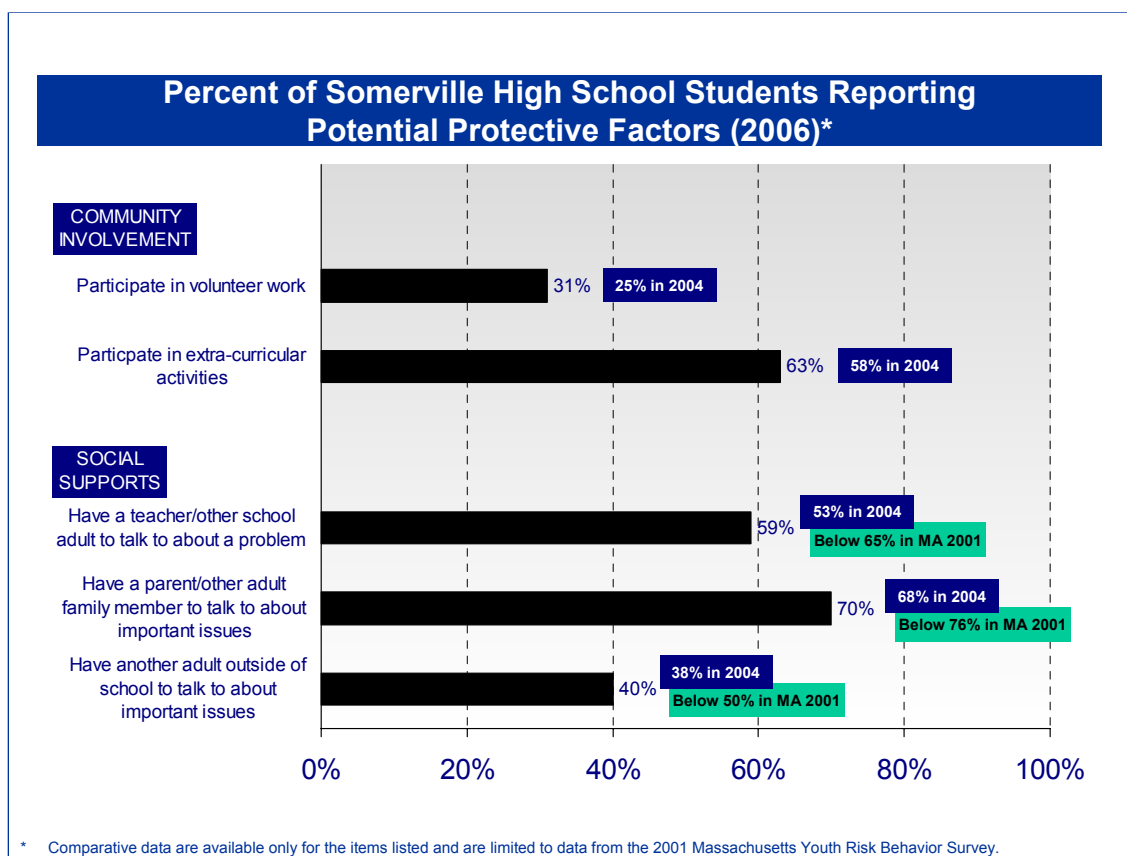
\* Massachusetts data from the 2005 *Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey* conducted by the MA Department of Education (spring 2005).

\*\* *Vigorous* physical activity was defined as participating in physical activities that make you sweat or breathe hard for at least 20 minutes. *Moderate* physical activity was defined as participating in physical activities that do not make you sweat or breathe hard for at least 30 minutes.

### SELECTED POINTS

- Fifty-four percent (54%) of Somerville high school students reported participating in *vigorous* physical activity at least 3 times in the past 7 days and 21% reported engaging in *moderate* activity at least 5 times in the same period.
- Vigorous physical activity was defined in the survey as participating in physical activities that make you sweat or breathe hard for at least 20 minutes. Moderate physical activity was defined as participating in physical activities that do not make you sweat or breathe hard for at least 30 minutes.
- **Trends:** There was an increase between 2004 and 2006 in both the percentage of Somerville high school students who reported engaging in *vigorous* physical activity (48% to 54%) and in *moderate* activity (16% to 21%).
- **Comparisons:** A smaller percentage of 2006 Somerville than 2005 Massachusetts high school students reported engaging in physical activity: *vigorous* activity three or more times (54% Somerville, 66% MA), *moderate* activity five or more times (21% Somerville, 25% MA).
- **Gender:** Somerville males were far more likely than females to report engaging in both *vigorous* activity (65% males, 45% females) and *moderate* activity (29% males, 15% females).
- **Grade:** The percentage of Somerville high school students who reported engaging in physical activity decreased with age/grade: *vigorous* activity (62% in 9<sup>th</sup> grade to 49% in 12<sup>th</sup> grade), *moderate* activity (24% in 9<sup>th</sup> grade to 17% in 12<sup>th</sup> grade).

# Resiliency



## SELECTED POINTS

- While the Somerville survey focused on many risk behaviors, it also contained items designed to measure the strength of certain protective factors such as social support and community attachment.
- Trends:** The percentage of Somerville high school students who reported each of these potential protective factors increased between 2004 and 2006: volunteer work (25% to 31%), extra-curricular activities (58% to 63%), school adult confidant (53% to 59%), family adult confidant (68% to 70%), non-family/school adult confidant (38% to 40%).
- Comparisons:** Comparative Massachusetts data are available only for the items related to social supports and are limited to 2001 data as the 2003 and 2005 data were not available at the time of this report. These comparative data show that Somerville high school students were less likely to report having caring adults to speak with about problems: a teacher or other school adult (59% Somerville, 65% MA), a parent or other adult family member (70% Somerville, 76% MA), another adult outside of school (40% Somerville, 50% MA).
- Gender:** There was no difference by gender in reported participation in extracurricular activities (64% males, 63% females). Female students were more likely than males to report volunteering (25% males, 35% females) and having either a school adult (54%, 64%) or non-family/school adult (31%, 47%) to talk to about a problem. Males were slightly more likely to report having a family adult confidant (71%, 69%).
- Grade:** The percentage of Somerville high school students who reported participating in volunteer work (30%, 25%, 31%, 38%) or extra-curricular activities (64%, 62%, 65%, 63%) varied slightly from grade to grade. The percentage of students who reported having social supports tended to increase with age/grade: teacher or other school adult (67%, 71%, 67%, 75%), parent or other family adult (49%, 58%, 62%, 71%), another adult outside of school (29%, 45%, 38%, 48%).

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## **Appendix A:**

### **Selected Data Tables**

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# 2005-2006 SOMERVILLE HIGH SCHOOL HEALTH SURVEY

## Alcohol and Other Drug Use – High School (N≈1,003)

	TOTAL						GENDER		GRADE			
	Somerville			MA YRBS			Females	Males	9 <sup>th</sup> (276)	10 <sup>th</sup> (249)	11 <sup>th</sup> (235)	12 <sup>th</sup> (235)
	2002 (1466)	2004 (1382)	2006 (1003)	2001 (4204)	2003 (3624)	2005 (3522)						
LIFETIME (any use in lifetime)												
Alcohol	64.6%	65.5%	62.9%	81%	75%	76%	65.8%	59.5%	55.5%	58.3%	63.6%	74.7%
Binge alcohol use <sup>1</sup>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Cigarettes	N/A	47.6%	41.5%	62%	53%	51%	43.0%	39.9%	35.3%	37.7%	43.6%	50.6%
Cigars, cigarillos, little cigars	N/A	22.8%	19.8%	N/A	N/A	N/A	15.2%	25.4%	18.0%	17.9%	16.9%	25.6%
Smokeless Tobacco	N/A	3.3%	4.2%	N/A	N/A	N/A	1.3%	7.5%	5.3%	4.5%	3.9%	2.1%
Marijuana	N/A	36.9%	33.5%	50%	47%	45%	31.8%	35.7%	26.0%	28.0%	38.1%	42.5%
Inhalants	13.9%	8.3%	9.0%	12%	N/A	N/A	10.0%	7.3%	9.5%	10.2%	9.1%	6.9%
Cocaine	N/A	6.5%	4.5%	8%	8%	8%	2.5%	7.1%	2.3%	5.7%	5.2%	5.2%
Heroin	N/A	1.7%	1.3%	3%	3%	2%	0.9%	1.6%	1.1%	1.2%	2.2%	0.9%
Methamphetamines	N/A	3.1%	1.6%	7%	6%	4%	1.9%	1.4%	1.1%	2.1%	1.7%	1.7%
Steroids (no prescription)	5.2%	2.3%	2.1%	5%	5%	4%	1.5%	2.8%	0.8%	3.3%	2.2%	2.1%
Ecstasy	N/A	8.8%	5.4%	13%	9%	7%	4.7%	6.2%	2.7%	4.1%	7.8%	7.3%
Oxycontin (no prescription)	N/A	6.2%	2.9%	N/A	N/A	N/A	1.7%	4.2%	1.2%	3.3%	2.2%	4.7%
Other Illegal Drugs <sup>2</sup>	N/A	6.7%	4.9%	N/A	N/A	N/A	3.2%	6.7%	3.5%	7.5%	3.1%	5.6%
CURRENT (any use in past 30 days)												
Alcohol	42.9%	43.3%	37.4%	53%	46%	48%	38.4%	36.7%	30.7%	37.3%	36.9%	46.0%
Binge alcohol use <sup>1</sup>	26.3%	25.5%	20.8%	33%	27%	27%	20.4%	21.5%	16.0%	17.7%	23.6%	26.5%
Cigarettes	20.5%	16.8%	14.2%	26%	21%	21%	13.9%	14.1%	13.6%	9.4%	15.8%	18.3%
Cigars, cigarillos, little cigars	N/A	7.6%	7.5%	13%	12%	14%	4.7%	10.9%	6.8%	6.6%	6.4%	10.2%
Smokeless Tobacco	4.4%	0.7%	1.5%	4%	4%	4%	0.2%	2.9%	1.9%	2.0%	1.3%	0.4%
Marijuana	27.9%	18.9%	19.0%	31%	28%	26%	15.8%	22.8%	13.4%	18.9%	21.2%	22.6%
Inhalants	N/A	2.9%	3.4%	N/A	N/A	N/A	3.6%	3.0%	3.4%	3.3%	4.3%	2.6%
Cocaine	N/A	2.8%	2.6%	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.8%	4.8%	0.0%	4.5%	3.0%	3.0%
Heroin	N/A	1.0%	0.5%	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.0%	1.1%	0.4%	0.8%	0.4%	0.4%
Methamphetamines	N/A	1.9%	0.5%	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.4%	0.7%	0.4%	0.8%	0.4%	0.4%
Steroids (no prescription)	N/A	1.6%	1.3%	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.6%	2.3%	0.4%	2.1%	1.7%	1.3%
Ecstasy	N/A	3.6%	2.2%	N/A	N/A	N/A	1.7%	2.5%	1.1%	2.1%	1.7%	3.4%
Oxycontin (no prescription)	N/A	3.0%	1.9%	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.8%	3.0%	0.4%	2.9%	0.9%	3.0%
Other Illegal Drugs <sup>2</sup>	N/A	2.7%	2.8%	N/A	N/A	N/A	1.9%	3.7%	1.5%	5.8%	1.3%	2.1%

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked if they had "5 or more drinks of alcohol in a row, that is, within a couple of hours."

<sup>2</sup> Respondents were asked about their use of "any other type of illegal drug such as LSD (acid), PCP, mushrooms, Ketamine (Special K), Rohypnol (Roofies), or GHB."

# 2005-2006 SOMERVILLE HIGH SCHOOL HEALTH SURVEY

## Violence and Safety – High School (N≈1,003)

	TOTAL						GENDER		GRADE			
	Somerville			MA YRBS			Females	Males	9 <sup>th</sup> (276)	10 <sup>th</sup> (249)	11 <sup>th</sup> (235)	12 <sup>th</sup> (235)
	2002 (1466)	2004 (1382)	2006 (1003)	2001 (4204)	2003 (3624)	2005 (3522)						
VIOLENCE-RELATED EXPERIENCES IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS												
Witnessed violence in your family (12 months)	9.8%	13.6%	14.5%	N/A	N/A	N/A	12.6%	16.0%	15.4%	12.4%	13.8%	16.3%
Received verbal or emotional abuse from someone in your family (12 months)	15.3%	21.6%	21.3%	N/A	N/A	N/A	23.3%	18.6%	15.5%	21.5%	22.4%	25.8%
Mistreated by someone who thought you were not masculine or feminine enough (12 months)	4.6%	8.0%	8.2%	N/A	N/A	N/A	6.6%	9.7%	11.8%	6.2%	6.9%	6.4%
Sexually harassed in school (12 months)	4.5%	12.4%	9.4%	N/A	N/A	N/A	11.6%	6.7%	10.3%	8.3%	9.5%	9.0%
Hurt physically or sexually by a date or someone you were going out with (12 months)	10.9%	5.0%	4.9%	N/A	N/A	N/A	5.5%	4.1%	4.5%	5.3%	3.9%	6.0%
Were a member of a gang (12 months)	N/A	6.0%	5.9%	8.0%	10%	10%	2.4%	9.9%	7.2%	5.4%	5.6%	4.7%
BULLYING, FIGHTING, & THREATENING IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS												
Bullied at school (12 months)	N/A	19.9%	17.8%	N/A	23%	24%	18.5%	16.9%	19.9%	17.9%	17.0%	16.7%
Bullied when NOT at school (12 months)	N/A	15.4%	13.7%	N/A	N/A	N/A	15.6%	11.0%	14.4%	10.2%	16.2%	13.7%
In a physical fight on school property (12 months)	N/A	15.0%	12.8%	12%	10%	10%	8.8%	17.1%	14.1%	13.8%	9.8%	12.3%
In a physical fight when NOT on school property (12 months)	N/A	24.0%	23.1%	N/A	N/A	N/A	17.0%	30.0%	22.2%	26.4%	23.5%	19.6%
Threatened or injured with a weapon on school property (12 months)	5.8%	6.3%	5.2%	8%	6%	5%	2.8%	7.9%	5.2%	4.9%	4.7%	5.1%
Threatened or injured with a weapon when NOT on school property (12 months)	N/A	10.5%	11.3%	N/A	N/A	N/A	7.1%	16.0%	10.1%	11.0%	11.5%	12.8%
WEAPONS CARRYING AND STAYING HOME FROM SCHOOL IN THE PAST 30 DAYS												
Carried a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on school property (30 days)	N/A	5.8%	6.9%	6%	5%	6%	3.9%	9.7%	6.0%	8.6%	6.0%	6.4%
Carried a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club when NOT on school property (30 days)	N/A	12.7%	14.4%	N/A	N/A	N/A	8.6%	20.8%	13.8%	17.6%	10.7%	14.5%
Stayed home from school because of fear for safety (30 days)	7.2%	6.6%	5.5%	8%	5%	4%	5.6%	4.7%	5.6%	4.1%	5.6%	6.4%

# 2005-2006 SOMERVILLE HIGH SCHOOL HEALTH SURVEY

## Mental Health – High School (N≈1,003)

	TOTAL						GENDER		GRADE			
	Somerville			MA YRBS			Females	Males	9 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>	11 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>
	2002	2004	2006	2001	2003	2005						
	(1466)	(1382)	(1003)	(4204)	(3624)	(3522)						
PERSONAL EXPERIENCES IN PAST 12 MONTHS												
Divorce or separation in family	6.5%	6.9%	8.2%	N/A	N/A	N/A	8.8%	6.9%	8.8%	8.4%	8.3%	6.8%
Family moved	9.8%	13.3%	14.7%	N/A	N/A	N/A	15.2%	14.1%	14.6%	12.3%	16.2%	15.5%
Family member or close friend died	28.7%	41.7%	38.4%	N/A	N/A	N/A	39.1%	37.5%	42.3%	42.1%	33.3%	36.2%
Ran away from home	5.2%	4.9%	6.2%	N/A	N/A	N/A	7.5%	4.4%	5.8%	7.6%	7.0%	4.3%
ANXIETY - Experienced during the past 12 months such that it affected ability to do things at home, school, or elsewhere												
Felt tense, nervous, or worried every day for two or more weeks in a row	N/A	29.3%	29.4%	N/A	N/A	N/A	38.9%	17.9%	25.9%	26.7%	31.3%	34.3%
Had your heart race, felt short of breath, or felt dizzy or frightened	N/A	25.6%	28.7%	N/A	N/A	N/A	37.9%	17.5%	26.8%	23.3%	28.4%	36.8%
Were afraid in social situations	N/A	18.6%	20.2%	N/A	N/A	N/A	23.3%	16.2%	19.0%	17.4%	22.1%	21.9%
Had thoughts or actions that you thought about or had to do over and over again for no apparent reason	N/A	24.6%	23.4%	N/A	N/A	N/A	29.1%	16.2%	19.8%	22.1%	24.0%	27.5%
Had a fear of flying, closed spaces, animals, or other specific situations	N/A	12.7%	14.2%	N/A	N/A	N/A	19.1%	8.3%	11.1%	17.1%	13.3%	15.0%
DEPRESSION AND SUICIDE												
Depressed <sup>1</sup> (12 months)	38.4%	31.6%	30.7%	29%	28%	27%	38.7%	20.8%	29.2%	27.0%	32.2%	33.6%
Seriously considered suicide (12 months)	21.0%	13.5%	13.6%	20%	16%	13%	16.7%	10.1%	13.8%	10.7%	14.7%	15.4%
Made a plan to commit suicide (12 months)	19.5%	11.8%	9.0%	15%	13%	12%	10.4%	7.3%	8.7%	7.4%	12.1%	7.7%
Attempted suicide (12 months)	14.1%	6.6%	5.8%	10%	8%	6%	7.5%	3.2%	4.2%	5.3%	8.2%	5.5%
SOCIAL SUPPORTS												
Have a parent or other adult family member to talk to about important issues	N/A	68.3%	69.8%	76%	N/A	N/A	68.7%	70.7%	67.0%	71.0%	66.5%	74.5%
Have a teacher or other adult school staff member to talk to about a problem	N/A	52.7%	59.3%	65%	N/A	N/A	63.6%	54.4%	49.4%	58.2%	61.5%	70.6%
Have another adult outside of school to talk to about important issues	N/A	38.3%	39.6%	50%	N/A	N/A	46.6%	31.2%	28.8%	44.6%	37.8%	48.1%

<sup>1</sup> Depression was described in the survey as feeling "so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that you stopped doing some usual activities."

# 2005-2006 SOMERVILLE HIGH SCHOOL HEALTH SURVEY

## Health – High School (N≈1,003)

	TOTAL						GENDER		GRADE			
	Somerville			MA YRBS			Females	Males	9 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>	11 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>
	2002	2004	2006	2001	2003	2005						
	(1466)	(1382)	(1003)	(4204)	(3624)	(3522)	(538)	(451)	(276)	(249)	(235)	(235)
SEXUAL BEHAVIOR												
Ever had sexual intercourse	50.8%	48.8%	49.1%	44%	41%	45%	45.7%	53.7%	37.1%	41.9%	55.5%	62.2%
Condom use at last intercourse <sup>1</sup>	N/A	71.4%	66.2%	58%	57%	65%	60.1%	72.2%	65.9%	71.1%	64.5%	64.2%
Alcohol/drugs at last intercourse <sup>1</sup>	N/A	17.1%	16.4%	23%	N/A	23%	12.9%	20.4%	17.8%	14.4%	18.2%	15.3%
Ever been/gotten someone pregnant	8.1%	5.2%	4.4%	5%	4%	5%	5.3%	3.4%	2.4%	2.1%	5.4%	8.0%
Ever sexual contact against will	N/A	8.0%	8.1%	10%	10%	10%	9.9%	6.0%	7.1%	8.2%	9.1%	7.6%
Ever had an STD	2.8%	1.6%	1.1%	3%	6%	5%	1.6%	0.2%	1.3%	0.0%	1.8%	1.3%
Ever taught about AIDS or HIV in school	89.2%	87.7%	87.9%	94%	92%	93%	90.4%	84.0%	88.3%	90.5%	81.5%	88.8%
Ever talked with parents or other family adults about AIDS/HIV infection	51.3%	48.5%	53.3%	N/A	N/A	N/A	57.3%	48.4%	51.5%	57.1%	51.6%	53.4%
WEIGHT												
Describe self as slightly/very overweight	28.5%	30.4%	32.1%	33%	31%	31%	34.0%	29.5%	30.6%	32.4%	29.4%	36.0%
Trying to lose weight	50.7%	47.8%	50.8%	47%	46%	47%	61.2%	37.7%	51.5%	50.2%	46.4%	55.6%
WEIGHT LOSS OR MAINTENANCE ACTIVITIES IN PAST 30 DAYS												
<i>Exercised</i> to lose/maintain weight	41.1%	67.0%	69.1%	32%	N/A	N/A	67.3%	71.3%	71.7%	71.9%	67.9%	64.3%
<i>Ate less</i> food, fewer calories, or foods low in fat to lose/maintain weight	34.7%	44.2%	44.5%	9%	N/A	N/A	53.5%	32.3%	40.3%	44.4%	43.6%	50.0%
<i>Fasted</i> for 24 hours or more to lose/maintain weight	9.8%	11.9%	13.1%	14%	12%	11%	16.5%	8.1%	14.8%	8.8%	16.0%	12.2%
<i>Took diet pills/powders/liquids</i> without a doctor's advice to lose/maintain weight	6.3%	6.5%	6.7%	8%	7%	5%	7.0%	6.3%	3.5%	6.6%	8.3%	8.5%
<i>Vomited/took laxatives</i> to lose/maintain weight	3.4%	5.0%	4.2%	6%	6%	6%	4.4%	3.8%	5.2%	4.8%	2.8%	4.0%
<i>Tried a fad/trend diet</i> to lose/maintain weight	1.6%	8.0%	8.0%	N/A	N/A	N/A	10.7%	4.3%	7.0%	8.4%	8.8	8.1%
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN PAST 7 DAYS												
Participated in regular <i>vigorous</i> physical activity (3 or more times in week)	46.9%	48.1%	54.3%	63%	61%	63%	45.4%	65.1%	61.8%	53.4%	52.1%	48.8%
Participated in regular <i>moderate</i> physical activity (5 or more times in week)	N/A	16.1%	21.4%	25%	24%	25%	15.2%	29.3%	23.6%	25.0%	19.9%	17.0%

<sup>1</sup> Of those who had sexual intercourse.